

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

IO-13 ACDA-07 CU-02 /078 W

-----260607Z 046925 /15

R 260345Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8583

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1916

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM SENT ACTION AMEMBASSY BANGKOK DATED JAN
26 IS REPEATED FOR ACTION:

QUOTE

SONGKHLA #0018

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, TH

SUBJECT: MIXED REACTION TO SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS

SUMMARY: TO DATE RTG MILITARY OPERATIONS BEGUN AGAINST COMMUNIST
PARTY OF THAILAND (CPT) IN THE SOUTH IN DECEMBER APPEAR TO BE
AT BEST A QUALIFIED SUCCESS. ALTHOUGH AIR STRIKES AND ARTILLERY
HAVE REPORTEDLY KILLED SOME INSURGENTS AND SCATTERED OTHERS,
LIMITED FOLLOW UP BY GROUND TROOPS LEAVES ACTUAL NUMBERS IN
QUESTION. OPERATION NOW CONCENTRATED IN NAKORN SRI THAMMARAT (NST)
AND SURATHANI REPORTEDLY IS RESULTING IN SOME DEFECTORS AND CAPTURE
OF SEVERAL INSURGENTS. AT SAME TIME, IT HAS NOT PREVENTED CT
FROM BURNING DISTRICT POLICE STATION AND LOOTING DISTRICT OFFICE
IN NST JAN 22 AND MARCHING IN FORCE ONTO TEACHER TRAINING CAMPUS
IN SURAT JAN 20. END SUMMARY.

1. GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS ON SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS LAUNCHED
AGAINST CPT IN THE SOUTH SINCE LAST DECEMBER ARE PREDICTABLY
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UPBEAT. OFFICIALS IN TRANG SAY MANY INSURGENTS WERE KILLED
BY BOMBING AND ARTILLERY ALTHOUGH EXACT NUMBER UNDETERMINED
AS THERE HAS BEEN NO GROUND ANALYSIS OF TARGET AREAS. IN NST
AND SURAT, WHERE OPERATION IS NOW CONCENTRATED, NUMEROUS CT
SUPPORTERS AND SEVERAL RANKING INSURGENT LEADERS HAVE REPORTEDLY
BEEN TAKEN INTO CUSTODY.

2. YET THERE ARE PROBLEMS. ACCORDING TO TRANG DEPUTY GOVERNOR BOONSAK WETWISUTH, OVER THREE HUNDRED FAMILIES EVACUATED FROM SENSITIVE AREAS IN TAMBOL NAM PHUT ARE NOW LIVING IN WATS IN THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL AND THE PROVINCE HAS NO FUNDS AVAILABLE TO CARE FOR THEM. IN TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF THE SPIRIT OF SOUTHERN UNITY, REQUESTS BY PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES TO TRANG MERCHANTS FOR DONATIONS TO ASSIST IN FEEDING VILLAGERS HAVE NOT BEEN MET WITH ENTHUSIASM.

AT PRESENT THE PROVINCE SEEMS TO HAVE NO PLAN AS TO WHAT WILL BE DONE WITH OR FOR THESE VILLAGERS AFTER THE OPERATION ENDS.

3. CONSULATE POLITICAL ASSISTANT TALKED WITH MERCHANTS IN TRANG JAN 22 WHO EXPRESSED SKEPTICISM AS TO EFFECTIVENESS OF BOMBING AGAINST INSURGENTS THERE. MERCHANTS ALSO CLAIMED A NUMBER OF ORDINARY VILLAGERS HAVE BEEN KILLED BY BOMBING. ONE MERCHANT FROM LA NGU DISTRICT OF SATUN SAID RESIDENTS OF LA NGU CONCERNED THAT CONCENTRATION OF BORDER PATROL POLICE AND MILITARY AGAINST COMMUNIST PARTY OF MALAYA (CPM) COULD LEAVE LA NGU VULNERABLE TO CPT ATTACK AGAIN (DISTRICT WAS ATTACKED FOR FIRST TIME IN MID DECEMBER 1976.)

4. THERE ARE REPORTS FROM TRANG THAT INSURGENTS ARE HAVING INCREASING DIFFICULTY KEEPING STUDENTS WHO HAVE JOINED THEM IN LINE. PROBLEM REPORTEDLY EXACERBATED BY INSURGENT LEADERS DEMANDS THAT FEMALE STUDENTS SLEEP WITH THEM TO DEMONSTRATE LOYALTY TO THE CAUSE. STUDENT REJECTION OF THIS SCHEME REPORTEDLY CAUSING SOME "FALLING OUT."

5. DESPITE CLAIMS OF GOVERNMENT SUCCESS IN NST AND SURAT, ON JAN CONFIDENTIAL

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20 INSURGENTS BROKE INTO THE SURAT TEACHERS COLLEGE AND STOLE WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION FROM THE OFFICE OF A CONSTRUCTION FIRM WORKING ON THE CAMPUS. ON JAN 22 INSURGENTS BURNED DOWN THE POLICE STATION AND LOOTED THE DISTRICT OFFICE IN THUNG YAI DISTRICT OF NST. THESE ACTIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED PSYCHOLOGICAL VICTORIES FOR INSURGENTS PARTICULARLY AS THEY TOOK PLACE AT A TIME WHEN RTG SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS CONCENTRATED IN PROVINCES WHERE ACTIONS OCCURED.

6.1 ON BALANCE OPERATION AGAINST CPT IN THE SOUTH APPEARS AT BEST A QUALIFIED SUCCESS. LONG TERM IMPACT WILL DEPEND ON WHAT RTG DOES TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN PRESENCE IN AREAS SUPPOSEDLY CLEARED IN MILITARY PHASE OF OPERATION. LOCAL OFFICIALS SEEM DECIDEDLY VAGUE AS TO WHAT IS TO BE DONE IN THE POST MILITARY PHASE. SIGNED HAMILTON. UNQUOTE. WHITEHOUSE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: PARAMILITARY FORCES, COMMUNISTS, COMBAT OPERATIONS
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: n/a
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Subject: MIXED REACTION TO SUPPRESSION OPERATIONS SUMMARY: TO DATE RTG MILITARY OPERATIONS BEGUN AGAINST COMMUNIST PARTY OF THAILAND (CPT) IN THE SOUTH IN DE CEMBER A
TAGS: PINS, PINT, MOPS, TH
To: STATE KUALA LUMPUR
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/713908d1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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